

Message Text

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12

ORIGIN AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 OPIC-03 FEA-01 ERDA-05 AID-05

CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01

H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04

USIA-06 SAM-01 OES-06 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 /100 R

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R 170055Z APR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 093466

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: ENRG, BPRO, US

SUBJECT:CONOCO OPERATIONS

1. AF/W OFFICERS (DIRECTOR AND NIGER AND CHAD DESKOFFS)
MET WITH THREE OFFICIALS OF CONOCO (INCLUDING CONOCO REP
N'DJAMENA VOEGELI) APRIL 13 TO DISCUSS THEIR COMPANY'S
ACTIVITIES IN CHAD, NIGER, AND CAR. BULK OF DISCUSSION
FOCUSED ON CHAD, WHERE CONOCO IS ATTEMPTING TO SET UP A
SMALL REFINERY OPERATION BASED ON ITS OIL DISCOVERIES
THERE.

2. CONOCO IN CHAD: CONOCO OFFICIALS GENERALLY FELT THAT
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THEY DID NOT YET HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO MAKE FIRM

ESTIMATE ON THE SIZE AND QUALITY OF DEPOSITS DISCOVERED IN CHAD. THE COMPANY HAS ALREADY SPENT DOLS 40 MILLION ON EXPORATION, AND MAY SPEND AS MUCH AS DOLS 60 MILLION MORE. THEY BELIEVE ABOUT 500 MILLION BBLs OF RESERVES PROVED, BUT POINT OUT EXPLOITATION WILL NOT BE FEASIBLE BEFORE PROVEN RESERVES REACH 1 BILLION BBLs. CONOCO AND PARTNERS IN CHAD VENTURE (CHEVRON AND SHELL) WILL DECIDE IN JUNE WHETHER TO PURSUE REFINERY OPERATION. FEASIBILITY STUDY NOW BEING PREPARED, ALONG LINES OF JOINT VENTURE WITH GOC TO OPERATE REFINERY AND MARKET POL PRODUCTS. CONOCO WHILE IN WASHINGTON, GROUP HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH OPIC AND INTERNATIONAL FINANCE CORPORATION (PART OF WORLD BANK GROUP) REGARDING FINANCING FOR REFINERY. IFC NOT PREPARED TO LEND TO GOC, BUT MAY BE READY TO LEND TO PRIVATE COMPANY. OPIC AGREED TO EXAMINE THE PROJECT IN MORE DETAIL.

3. CONOCO IN OTHER COUNTRIES: IN NIGER, CONOCO CLAIMED THAT RESULTS OF ITS EXPLORATIONS HAVE BEEN DISAPPOINTING, AND IT WILL SOON DISMANTLE DRILLING RIG AND RETURN IT TO CHAD. CONOCO FEELS THAT ITS CONCESSION IN NIGER IS NOT THE MOST PROMISING, AND WILL NOT PURSUE FURTHER EXPLORATION. HOWEVER, CONOCO WILL CONTINUE ITS PARTICIPATION IN URANIUM VENTURE WITH FRENCH FIRM CEA. IN CAR, CONOCO HAS EXPLORATION RIGHTS ON CONCESSION IN NORTH, BUT DOES NOT HAVE ANY IMMEDIATE PLANS FOR TEST DRILLINGS. IN CAMEROON, CONOCO HAS CONCESSION ADJOINING HOLDINGS IN CHAD, BUT AGAIN PRELIMINARY STUDIES DO NOT APPEAR PROMISING. N.B. CONOCO OPERATIONS IN ALL THREE COUNTRIES ARE UNDER DIRECTION OF MANAGER IN N'DJAMENA, FRENCH NATIONAL ANDRE VOEGELI.

4. UPCOMING MINISTERIAL VISIT: CONOCO HAS INVITED ONE MINISTER EACH FROM CHAD, NIGER AND CAR TO VISIT US FOR APPROXIMATELY EIGHT DAYS BEGINNING APRIL 19. VOEGELI WAS CERTAIN ONLY OF IDENTITY OF CHADIAN PARTICIPANT, MINISTER OF TRANSPORTS, PUBLIC WORKS, MINES AND GEOLOGY ZAKARIA. VOEGELI DESCRIBED TRIP AS BRIEFING AND GOODWILL GESTURE. ROBINSON

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